

"Well?" said Sybil, inquiringly.

Captain Campbell, condensing the story, gave them the main and principal facts in a few words. Both listened with deep interest, but the eyes of pale, haggard face, with its dark, wavy hair, glazing at them through the window, Willard Drummond started violently and turned pale. Sybil's eagle eyes were fixed on him, and she alone observed it.

"And what does Mrs. Tom take this nocturnal visitor to be?" inquired Sybil. "A mortal like herself, or a spirit disembodied?"

"Oh, a ghost, of course!" replied her brother.

"The spirit, perhaps, of the woman wailed up to perch on the boughs of the moldering oak! I know the story altogether is hideous enough to give me the nightmare! And now that you have learned all, I believe I'll go and send Lem down to inter the body."

Captain Campbell sauntered away, and the lovers were alone.

"And what do you think of this story, Willard?" inquired Sybil.

"I cannot tell. Yesterday I would have joined your brood in laughing at it, but—"

He paused.

"And why not to-day?" breathlessly inquired Sybil.

"Sybil, I do not wish to needlessly alarm you; but last night, as if to punish my carelessness, I experienced something very like a supernatural visit."

"Good heavens, Willard! Then the story told by the negroes is true?"

"It certainly seems like it. Had any one else told me what I experienced, I should think they were humbugging me; but I cannot discredit what I saw with my own eyes."

"And what was the appearance of the nocturnal visitor?"

"Exactly like the description Mrs. Tom gives of the face that appeared at her window. White as that of the dead, with dark, streaming hair, and wild, vacant, dark eyes."

"Oh, Willard! Can it be that—but no, it is impossible! What hour did this apparition appear?"

"Between one and two, as near as I can judge."

"Strange, strange! I, too, had heard something dreadful last night."

"Is it possible? What was it, dearest Sybil?"

"Last night, as I might have been awakened by some noise, I followed a heavy, faint right outside my door, was struck by a great, deep, hollow sound, that the very blood seemed freezing in my veins. Trembling with terror, I half-rose to listen, but all for a time was still. I was about to drop again, when a shriek, the most appalling, broke over the air, and died away in an agonized moan. I dared not move; I could not sleep, and lay cowering in superstitious horror until morning. With the bright sun came relief, and I could, at least, bear to mention what I had heard to my brother or father. They both laughed at—even as you feared the same. Willard, there must be some horrible mystery here; some foul crime, I fear, has at some time been perpetrated within these walls. What if—"

Silence.

"Well, Sybil?" he said, inquiringly.

"Oh, Willard! What if this house has been the scene of that mystery the dying man spoke of? I thought of it from the first."

"What if?"

"What if? What an idea!" And yet he looked disturbed himself, as he spoke.

"How otherwise are we to account for those ghostly visitings, those midnight apparitions and apalling shrieks?"

"An old yet nothing could induce your brother to adopt your belief. He would laugh at our crudity, were we to tell him what we have seen and heard."

"Yes, and perhaps I had better not tell him, Willard. I will have your room changed, and my own likewise. If they are less comfortable, they will be more endurable than to be disturbed by midnight speculators."

"Be it so, then, fairest Sybil," he said, gayly. And turning, they walked together to theodge."

CHAPTER VI.

"OFF WITH THE OLD MAN AND ON WITH THE NEW."

"Ho! St. Francis! what a change is here!"

"Is Rosalie, whom they say is here?"

"So soon forsaken? Young men's loves, then, lie Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes."

"ROMANCE AND JULIET."

The following night passed without disturbance, except in the solitude at Campbell's Lodge.

Early in the morning Captain Campbell went over to the mainland on business. And Sybil, accompanied by Drummond, went down to the cottage to visit Mrs. Tom. There was an inward feeling of pleasure at Sybil's heart when she learned Christie was away to New York for a while. Not that she doubted Willard, but she remembered Christie as a pretty child, grown by this time double-bosomed like a lovely girl, and it might not be altogether safe to throw the gay man of the world into dangerous society.

Toward noon, as they were sauntering along the sunshiny beach, she hanging on his arm, while he softly whispered the words "ladies love to hear," they espied a small, advancing toward them. Sybil raised her telescope and saw it was Willard.

"Rev. Mr. Mark Brantwell and wife," she exclaimed, in tones of surprise and pleasure. "Guy has doubtless called upon them, and told them I was here."

"Friends of yours?" asked Willard.

"Yes, the Episcopal clergyman of N—, whom I have known since my earliest childhood. But here they are."

At this time touched the shore, and Sybil, disengaging her arm, ran down to meet them. Willard had followed, and in time to see his lady love folded in the arms of a gentleman who sprang from the boat. The stranger was of middle age, a man, and a clergyman; yet in spite of all, Mr. Drummond felt a sudden twinge of jealousy and anger at his friend's familiarity. By the look of mind, jealousy, anger, every feeling was swallowed up in astonishment, not unmixed with superstitious horror. For the clergyman turned round, and Willard obtained a view of his face, he recognized the countenance of old Christie ten years before, in that mystic vision at the Ecypnion.

For a moment he stood regarding him, pale with wonder; and it was only when he heard the clear, ringing voice of Captain Campbell, as he approached him, saying, with a hearty slap on the shoulder:

"Willard, man alive, what sells you to me now? You are as pale as ghost," that he awoke from his trance of surprise.

"Are you ill?" said Sybil, anxiously, as she approached, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Brantwell.

"A sight here—nothing more," said Willard, recovering himself by an effort; "nothing worth being alarmed about," he added, seeing Sybil's still anxious eyes.

"They, Sybil, have you grown pale and cowardly?" inquired Mr. Brantwell. "You used to be as bold and daring as a mountain eagle?"

"Eh, Sybil, have you grown pale and cowardly?" he added, while Sybil's dark face grew crimson, as she hurried on with increased rapidity, drawing her companion with her and leaving the gentleman behind.

When they reached the lodge, Sybil left her brother to enter on their guests, while she set about preparing luncheon. When the meal was over, Mrs. Brantwell said:

"And now, Miss Sybil, I have come to carry you off. I am three years since I have had the pleasure of seeing you, and I shall certainly take you with me now, no excuses—I will not hear one of them."

"But, my dear Mrs. Brantwell—" began Sybil.

"But, my dear Miss Campbell, you must come—do you not know that your brother can certainly do without you for a week?"

"Yes, and glad to be rid of her too," said the gallant Captain Campbell.

Sybil stole a glance toward Drummond—from under her eyelids. He was sitting looking out of the window, with an expression deeply troubled written on his brow. Mrs. Brantwell perceived the glance, and broke out again with her usual bluntness.

"And as for that other gentleman you were looking at, Sybil, am sure he will be generous enough to speak for you for us, as we will, in all probability, have enough of you both, long enough."

Again Sybil cringed and glanced reproachfully at her plain-spoken friend, and again Mr. Drummond was forced to smile, in spite of his ill-humor, at the good-humored smile.

"You will have to come, you see, Miss Sybil," said Mr. Brantwell, laughing.

"Of course she will," added his brisk spouse; "and upon my word I think I am doing her a favor in taking her from this lonesome island, and letting her see a little of civilization. Life at our hands; though, from Sybil's looks, I should say she doesn't feel at all grateful for it."

"Indeed, Mrs. Brantwell, I do, but—"

"There, there! I won't listen to another word."

And Mrs. Brantwell, a tall, good-humored little lady, clapped her hand over her ears. "Guy, make this ungrateful sister of yours hold her tongue, and do as she is told."

"Come, Sybil, there is no help for it, you see."

She would infinitely have preferred remaining on the island with Willard, but she would go along to follow him, that was her reason; and, after all, a week would soon pass. Had Christie been home, no persuasions could have induced her to go; but in her absence there was nothing to fear. Then, too, Willard, so long accustomed to her presence, would miss her so much when she was gone, that doubtless his love would be increased rather than diminished.

Involuntarily, while thinking of him, her eyes wandered to where he stood. Again the sharp-sighted Mrs. Brantwell observed it, and again she broke out, laughing.

"Lord bless me! Mr. Drummond, just turn round, will you, and tell Sybil what you go."

"Nothing ea thyself, and you will have permission."

"I'm sure you were her father, she couldn't be more alike."

"Miss Campbell needs no permission of mine. I am only too happy to think she will have an opportunity of enjoying herself."

"I'm sure that's a mercy to be thankful for."

"The spirit, perhaps, of the woman wailed up to perch on the boughs of the moldering oak! I know the story altogether is hideous enough to give me the nightmare! And now that you have learned all, I believe I'll go and send Lem down to inter the body."

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The Beautiful Sphinx: OR, THE MAN-SPIDER OF WIRTHMOOR.

A TALE OF EARLY ST. LOUIS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "STEALING A HEART," "HERCULES, THE HUNCHBACK," "PEARL OF PEARLS," "THE SILVER SERPENT," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DOUBLE TRAIL.

GLOOMY was the grief that settled upon Wirthmoor.

The old and affectionate servants lamented the loss of an indulgent master, and the house was festooned in mourning.

The master was largely canvassed; it flew to the north and west, and caused a shudder among the people. Famous detectives came down from London to work up the case; the authorities offered heavy rewards for information that would bring to justice the heartless assassin of this aged and feeble gentleman, who ever lived like a pure Christian, a valuable subject, and whose hospitalities were manifold.

But there was no clue. Only one being in the world could tell the mystery of the dead; and he was madly delirious, tied to his bed, constantly guarded by faithful nurses, while three eminent physicians remained unfiringly at his side.

The horrible wound inflicted by the timber on the skull of Tyron Wirth, was not a death-stroke. By a miracle, he lived—after a painful and dangerous operation—the ghoul devoured him, left him helpless, robbed of memory and reason, a fevered, raving thing that had to be bonded to restrain the excess of his insane paroxysms.

And while the Spider lay thus—not knowing the hand that fed him, nor the voice of his master who tried to soothe him, nor the encouragement of the physicians who ministered to him, other events progressed at Wirthmoor and in its vicinity.

Grafton Ulster, darkly grave, called upon Agnes and tendered his condolence.

"I sympathize with you, darling, in this hour of affliction," he said, softly, when she came down to receive him. "How sad, how terrible—Why, you won't kiss me, Agnes?"

Leading her to a sofa, he would have embraced her. But she pushed him gently back.

"You are very kind, Grafton; but—don't touch me."

"What means this cold reception, Agnes? I ought to be welcome in such an hour."

"You are, dear Grafton—so you are. I am glad you have come. But let me be only because of my father's death, please. Do not speak, or remind me in any way, of our love, I—"

"Agnes?"

"I cannot think of ourselves now, Grafton. More: I—I must tell you something."

"Well?" he inquired, as she paused.

Her eyes, though red with weeping, were dry now, and there was a look of forced sternness in them.

"We must bury our love, dear Grafton—from to-day we must forget each other as wholly as if we had always been strangers."

"Agnes! What are you thinking about?" he exclaimed, in astonishment.

"Well! it is hard, very hard; but I have a duty to perform a duty far more absorbing than our poor affection—a duty to the dead!"

"You chill me!" half-interrupted the dark lover.

"I confess I don't understand at all. What can take precedence to our truth?—what makes you forget your vows to me? Agnes—girl—do not talk this way."

"We must bury our love, dear Grafton—from to-day

"Ho! *Caramba!* I shall be killed! You Sphinx! murderer! Let me out of this! Help! help! or I shall beat my own brains out! I am going mad! Help!"

And while the dismayed Vargas roared and shouted, he bumped the back of his head on the floor till his teeth rattled, strained till his blood-vessels seemed ready to rupture. But suddenly he desisted. He heard a sound like the raising of a window-sash; then there was a strange voice, that called lowly:

"Coco Vargas?"

"Hey! exclaimed the Spaniard, striving to glance round toward the window, but prevented by his bonds. "Who is that? *Caramba!* where are you?"

A noise like a leap from the window-sill, followed by a light step; then a man stood over him.

"Ho! The Devil! It is the model-maker!" he cried, in astonishment, as he recognized Gilbert Montrose, whom he had not seen since he resided in Cairo, near eleven years before.

"Hush!" said Montrose, frowning. "I have come to liberate you."

"Excellent!" and Vargas brightened wonderfully. "Clip off these bonds then, sir model-maker; you are an admirable fellow!"

"It was fortunate that I saw the cab and the parties that captured you on Elliott avenue. I was just about to enter the house of Francoise Ellory, whom I love—"

"Whom you love?" echoed Vargas, amazed. "Ho! I love her myself. Furies of thunder! Francoise Ellory is not for you!" and he rolled his eyes as he stared upward at the model-maker.

Montrose smiled, grimly.

"Coco Vargas, your life is in danger. I am the only person who can save you. Upon two conditions I will set you free."

"First, you must swear never to aspire to the hand of my Francoise—"

"Your Francoise! *Caramba!*"

"Second, you must swear that, forever in the future, you will shun Favia Claremont, and utterly set aside your vow to destroy her."

"*Caramba!*" sputtered the helpless Vargas, again. "How can I do that? Sphinx! Sorceress! I hate her!"

"I once loved Favia Claremont, and I judged her wrongly, which I have regretted. I saw enough of her, though, while looking in through that window, to make me care nothing for her now. Still I would be humane, and shield her from your merciless enmity."

"If you loved her once, love her again. Marry her. Clear out with her. I will not trouble her. So, help me out of this fix at once."

"You have heard my proposition," said Gilbert Montrose, folding his arms and calmly surveying the Spaniard. "Swear that you will give up all hopes of marrying Francoise Ellory, and leave St. Louis within a week; swear, too, that you will no longer pursue Favia Claremont. It is life or death to you. Choose."

"Francoise! my adored Francoise!" groaned Vargas. "But, no matter—and his voice sharpened—"get me clear of this, and I promise what you ask."

"Swear it!" insisted Montrose; and as he spoke he knelt down and placed a cross-hilted dagger to the lips of Coco Vargas. "Swear by the Virgin, by your hopes of salvation, by Heaven and earth, your heart, your body, your soul, your sight, and by the sign of this holy cross! Swear!"

"I swear it by all!" growled Vargas, who repeated after him the conditions of his freedom.

The next instant the dagger, the cross he had kissed and sworn by, Sundered the cords and straps that bound him, and he sprang to his feet with an oath.

The Spaniard paused not to thank his deliverer, nor did he hear the reminder which Gilbert Montrose hallooed after him.

"Remember your oath! or beware my vengeance, Coco Vargas!" called Montrose; and he hurried away in the gloom.

Vargas was heading for the den of Jean Banquo.

He had not gone far before he met a man—not that there was anything remarkable in the man's fact—but this man stepped directly in front of him, and tapped him familiarly on the shoulder.

"Hello, fellow! who the dogs are you?" he growled, surly and snappish.

"I'm Davie, and you're Coco Vargas. Know me? Well, I've been scouring round ever since dark, hunting for you. This here's a most lucky 'find,' by crackey!"

"Oh, you are Davie! You are 'one of us?'" and Vargas became familiar also. "You've been searching for me—for what, now?"

"Well, we've had a sort of accident. Guess you an' me'll have to fix that 'ere bank business by ourselves."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Captain Baxter was run over by a heavy wagon, just about dark, on Plum street. Guess he must 'a' been drunk, somehow. But that ain't just exactly it. You see he's hurt mighty bad, an' thinkin' he's goin' to die, he's rollin' on the bed and talkin' about ministers an' such."

"Ministers! *Caramba!*"

"He sort of acts like he wants to make a confession—"

"A confession! *Santissima!* he will ruin us!"

The ruffian nodded.

"And where is he? What have you done with him?"

"Locked him into his room—an' here's the key."

"Good! Let us get to him," and, to him self, as the ruffian nodded again and led the way: "A confession! *Caramba!* not if I can help it—the dog! Ho! a fine mess he'd make of it. I'll stop his mouth."

He strode after the man, in the direction of the house where their crippled pal was confined. But the forthcoming confession of this Captain Baxter was vastly different from what the two men anticipated—they reasonably supposing that he meant to divulge his alliance with them in the plot against the Merchants' Bank.

Retiring to another apartment, after leaving her captive enemy, Favia Claremont found her two tools awaiting her.

"It is well done," she said. "Now then, one more task before I pay you."

She seated herself at a small desk, and wrote briefly. Sealing the note and addressing it, she handed it, together with the document she had taken from Vargas, to Nelson, the long-shoreman.

"Take this, instantly, to the chief of police, or to any other of the authorities. When you return, I will have your pay ready for you. Go—and hasten."

And when she was alone:

"This chance I will give Coco Vargas for his life. If, when he has served in jail, and has learned that the Sphinx can deal with him—if, then, he persists in hounding on my track, I will shoot him down at first sight! He shall not live in my very company, as he has been doing at the gambling saloon for a whole month. Fool that I was to imagine he could not penetrate my mask! But he is in my power now. And so, Coco Vargas, the Sphinx has turned upon you at last; you have trailed her to your own destruction, instead of hers!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 287.)



AMOR VINCIT.

BY HENRY AUSTIN.

Spelling weakness!

Spell-bound—oh, for shame!

By a pair of blue eyes

Lit by roses' bright flame!

Should how I be stricken

By two love-lit eyes?

I, so philosophic,

I, so wondrous wise?

I, by pride elated,

Never dreamt, oh, no!

That a woman's fancy

Could my will subdue.

I to care for women,

Who the world abhorred;

Womaned what we in them

That could be adored:

Took them for part triflers;

Painted butterflies;

Giddy laughers; mock-heroic,

Empty entities;

Laughed at tender glances,

Sneered at heaving sighs,

Looked on declarations

But as gilded lies:

Watched the gaudy shadows

In my stole pride;

Smiled at their endeavors

Empty heads to hide.

Heartiest welcome smile they

On the rich man's son;

Noses turn up at him

When the play is done.

Pledging at the altar

Love that knows no dearth;

Making of the fireside

But a home seat—

Woe!—I have called her

Quintessence of life—

Taken to our bosoms

But to turn and kill;

Golden, roseate apple,

Core but poisoned ash;

Hollow, heartless nothing,

Born to lies and flash.

I had watched the mother

School her bright-eyed girl

How to laze her bodice,

How adjust a curl.

She, a willing pupil,

Scarcely needeth art;

Mother Nature's taught her

Well to play her part;

And I thought that never

Girl would be to me

More than painted picture,

Pretty, true, to see!

Vase of Nature's carving,

With a delicate curve,

Stately for a sculptor,

Thing without a heart!

And yet two tiny feet,

Pattering along,

Cause my heart to beat like

Drum in battle's throng.

Magnet ne'er was pole-witched

More than witched am I

By the mellow luster

Of a beaming eye.

And I would not give my

Love for all the loves

Ever turned half crazy

Wiser heads than Jove's.

She Who Dared.

BY LUCILLE C. HOLLIS.

"Oh, God!"

There was no irreverence in the tone or words. They were wrung from Cuba Hensleigh's lips by bewildering agony of feeling. There was intense astonishment, ananguished moan of love, a mad, passionate protestation against a bitter fate, mingled in that forcible, half-suppressed cry. Then Cuba sat very still and looked out into the dusk, and at the man whom she loved with all the intensity and unchangeableness of which the real passion is capable.

Quite motionless she sat at the window, beside the forward door; as motionless as when before, half dreamily, she had watched the twilight deepen in the wooded chasms, and along the rocky ledges, when the train was flinging itself onward with thundering reverberations. But no longer she heeded the moonlight sifted through the forest treelops and shimmering down upon the valley lakes, nor the stars coming out so pale and soft far above the noisy engine, nor the clouds of steam that lighted up so gorgeously when the fireman opened the doors to the fire under the great boiler.

It was while those doors were open, and the glare of the fire had paled the moonbeams, that the man had come through the car, gone out of the door at Miss Hensleigh's side, and stood full in the red gloom.

He was a supple, well-shaped man, despite his coarse attire and blue-cheeked blouse; a handsome-faced man under the soot with which he was begrimed and the slouched hat drawn low over his forehead. He lifted one of the buckets from the tender, dipped it in the tank of water, and, placing it in front of him on the car platform, washed hands and face, all unconscious that within the half-dark and almost-deserted car one passenger watched him with face white as the dead and the stony motionlessness of a statue.

"He, Dyce Meade!" Cuba Hensleigh was

thinking, "the pride of Yale," a common brakeman! Can the world be ruled by anything but fate? Can there be a God, to permit such injustice? He is as innocent of any crime as the purest soul upon whom these moonbeams fall!"

She thought this, she believed it, and

she loved him!

But she never moved when he threw away

the water, flung the painted bucket back in

the tender, and came through the car, passing

so near her that some of the drops from his

hands fell upon her dark silk suit. She

was thinking of when she had looked last on his face—raised to hear the verdict of the jury.

"Dyce! Only that!"

How well her aching heart understood the haunted agony in his blue eyes, the spasm of pain that flitted like a pale shadow over his face, the momentary writhing of his firm hands. That, innocent though he was, he could welcome

a verdict of guilty rather than a reprieve to a life ruined, disgraced. If he had but looked across to where she sat, in her mourning-dress, and seen the trust, the love, the pleading, in her eyes. But no! he went away without one word. And now—after two years—he was here; and she had not made himself known to him, though he had passed so near her that she had but to lift her hand to lay it on his arm.

The engine gave a wild shriek; the cars groaned, and plunged, and were still; the voice of a brakeman—not Dyce Meade's—shouted the name of the station.

"Conseil Manor!" Miss Hensleigh looked through the dim car, then went out, and away from the man she loved as she knew she never could love another.

The cars

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In Mr. Albert W. Aiken's INJUN DICK;

OR,

The Death Shot of Shasta,

To start in the next issue of the JOURNAL, we present a tale of California life of marvellous interest. A sequel to the celebrated "Overland Kit," "Rocky Mountain Rob," and "Kentuck, the Sport," it closes the career of that wonderful man, Dick Talbot.

A Stranger Character the Whole Range of American Fiction does not present.

A mountain robber, yet a man endowed with the instincts of a gentleman; a gambler, yet governed by principles of honor; a quick enemy, but a sublime friend; a relentless avenger, but a singularly gentle protector; hunted, outlawed, a terror, yet living among men in impenetrable disguise: this is Dick Talbot—

A man only possible in California, where human nature has its most extraordinary development!

He is a type—a representative of a class, and in these stories stands out, a clearly-cut original, whose career is equally typical of the condition of things which even yet has not disappeared in the great mountain ranges and the lonely gulches. In

INJUN DICK;

OR,

THE DEATH SHOT OF SHASTA,

Mr. Aiken presents a fitting climax to the man's wild and anomalous life. Once more disguised, he is, in this story, apparently a wholly new and unknown adventurer, and yet is the untamable tiger, in pursuit of the enemies by whose acts his life was rendered a living sorrow. With this episode in his career come several new and genuinely Californian characters:

Mack, the Mountain Stage-Driver,
Old Ugly, the Inveterate Gamester,
Sandie Rocks, the Hunter-Miner,
Judge Bob Candy, the Referee,
Brown, the Clear-grit Sharp,

Patrice, the Landlord's Daughter,
Nelly, the Old Gamester's Daughter,

and with these two, whose reappearance will give new zest to their unique exploits, viz.:
The Man from Red Dog,
Joe Bowers, the Bummer,

both of whom are creations who will stand as originals not likely soon to be forgotten.

Among all these moves the mysterious Cherokee, while at intervals flashes before them, in some wild deed of revenge,

The Dread White Rider! whose appearance always signaled the death of one or more men.

Little by little the drama unfolds, and when the denouement comes, we have a revelation that is startling, and a close that is sublime.

No serial of recent years will compare with this in essential interest. Each chapter is a novelty of act and personality. Each episode is a picture such as Bret Harte himself might have been proud to paint; and the whole gives a story which once read will be remembered as something

WEIRD-LIKE, STRANGE AND ENTHRALING!

The Arm-Chair.

A LADY contributor, speaking of matters literary, says: "As I get older I become more diffuse in my style, and find it difficult to abbreviate," etc., etc.

Which is not an encouraging prospect for publishers, who demand what is graphic; and it is not the proper order of progress. As authors grow in practice the study should be to attain a clear, concise and graceful style—which a suffusion of adjectives, and diffusion of conjunctions, and effusion of figures of fancy never can become.

To use six words for expressing an idea or fact when five well-chosen words make a clearer and more impressive impression is one of the common mistakes of journalists and literateurs. It only goes to show the wretched neglect of elementary instruction in our schools. A teacher who teaches precision in expression is a rare sight to see in "common" or "high" schools, while the greatest adepts in diffuse and redundant talk are your college professors.

Men found scholarships, donate immense sums to endow a favorite college, bestow benefactions on libraries and art galleries, but of all the long list of such beneficiaries not one has given a cent to directly encourage the correct use of their own language. Won't some one, having more money than his relatives can conscientiously accept, lay aside enough to found a Professorship of Common Sense and Good English in any one of our millionaire colleges? He will doubtless be voted a "visionary," but a race of boys will rise up and call him blessed.

"If you do not use the sketch," writes a contributor, "please inform me by postal card and I will send postage for return."

This is just what we ought not to be asked to do. To comply compels us to correspond with the author, to lay aside the *Ms.* for preservation, to await a future order, and, when it comes, to overhaul the *Ms.* and pass it over to the mail clerk for return. Or, if the stamps don't come, there is the *Ms.* to keep on hand for weeks, or months, subject to order.

Business compels the final disposition of manuscripts, by the editor, the moment they are accepted or declined. When once the contribution has passed his hands, he cannot, without inconvenience and loss of time, recur to it again. Hence the request made of every contributor for the press: "Those who wish their declined contributions returned must have stamps enclosed for such return. No manuscript can be held for future order."

If contributors only would accept this as final, it would save the editor a deal of trouble, and preserve many a manuscript from destruction—put into the waste-basket, after reading and rejection, because the editor cannot be bothered about it again.

Sunshine Papers.

Ruminations—Caninely.

MAJOR—not Major, somehow, only Major—was a dog; a nice dog, too. A Newfoundland—large, and glossy, and shaggy, with a face that looked as if he knew something. Oh, such a superior dog to Mrs. Brainerd's shivering, snapping little spaniel, and Miss Follie's nasty, red-eyed poodle!

Major was a chance acquaintance. He used to pop out from a house I was forced to pass daily, and trot by my side some distance.

I hate dogs! (with due deference to your memory I say it, Major.)

I never indulge in anticipatory worrying concerning any other death, but I can't quite myself into thinking I can endure hydrophobia philosophically. But, if ever I have it, I may not get it from a poodle, but from a dog that is a dog (was rather; he's dead now, poor fellow!) like Major. That is what I used to think when Major first frightened me into a desire to scream, by honoring me with his espionage. But after a time we got to know each other so well, Major and I, that I could give him quite a calm greeting of a morning, and almost a cheerful one when the train was late, and, walking home in the lusk, he would meet me half-way and stay by my side a few minutes.

One night I was later than usual, alone, and the evening stormy. I was really glad when I reached the house where Major abode and he came patterning out to me. We had not gone far when a form loomed through the darkness and nearly reeled against me. Instinctively I put my hand upon Major's head. At that moment my hatred of dogs and fears of hydrophobia were insignificant compared to my horror of a drunken man and dread of reason ruled by alcoholic fiends. The man halted and uttered a curse; the dog crouched low, with a warning growl. My vis-a-vis hurried away, and Major escorted me quite home, holding a bit of my dress in his mouth.

Always after that he was waiting at the spot, took hold of my dress, and walked to my gate.

In the winter I only saw Major weekly. One Saturday, stopping a moment to pat him, I learned from a boy at the gate that the same cavalier had done more than growl at a drunken man. He had saved his mistress' little girl from drowning under the treacherous ice of the river.

Toward spring I missed Major. Making inquiries, I learned that a butcher had killed the dog, for stealing meat from his cart.

Such a disgraceful death to record of such a brave dog, and the only one I ever did tolerate!

I might have repeated, "I never nursed a dear gazelle," etc., and dropped a tear; but I was sentinel; but instead, I reflected—one dog that cannot give me hydrophobia!

And yet, Major, old fellow, with all my dread of your race, I acknowledge that they have many good qualities. I remember your good deeds reverently, and recall what a comfort your presence was to me occasionally.

Now, when I feel a shiver of fear creep over me at the approach of some canine specimen, I remember you, and say a pleasant word to the animal for your sake. The larger the dog the easier the task; but the little ones—!

Oh, Major! did not you yourself dislike the little dogs? The hateful, barking, snapping, diminutive curs that rush at one's heels and bare one noisily?

No, you did not. I recall a scene when a coxcombical little cur sought to annoy and brawny-bust you with his egotistical parade and noise. You walked along as if equally calmly unconscious of his presence and that he was barking you, which he certainly was, for I saw him give several vicious nips at your heels. But let me tell you, Major, had you been a scale or two higher in the animal kingdom, could you have walked on two feet and spoken "The King's English" (with or without regard to Richard Grant White), you would not have been so sublimely indifferent. At least, I'm afraid you would not have been; for, Major, it is exceedingly hard for individuals to pass by the annoyances of little dogs as you were wont to pass them by.

Old fellow, was it a consciousness of superior worth, of unassailed reputation, that the curs sought to attract attention to themselves by noisy barking you, that the wretched reason they barked was because they dared not bite, that made you so grandly calm?

Ah! you are powerless to make the truth known; but that it was, beyond doubt. And, Major, I wish there were thousands of men and women like you, old fellow—kind in heart, brave in deed, calmly superior to the malice of brainless fops and narrow-minded, carpenter critics. I do believe there are a few. And may we all, the owners and oppressors of your race, like you, treat with supreme indifference, kind pity even, those who seek to annoy and injure us!

Yes; by a life devoted to the acquiring of worthless habits, Christian graces, an honorable name, a consciousness of rectitude, we can bear calamity calmly and pity those who stain their hands with mud with which they would fail so soon.

That is a lesson worth learning, Major!

How glorious it would be if every girl and boy who sends Fido to "fetch a stick" and teaches Prince to "shake hands," would comprehend it and aim through school life and after graduation into the *beau monde*, politics, and on "change, to be beyond the bite and superior to the bark of the small dogs of society. Not that all small dogs are of that class. There are the curled, bedecked, blanketed little poodles!

Aren't they disgusting, Major? But I despise their enervated, shallow, soulless miseries even more than I do the little beasts!

I record that, Major, from a desire to be just to all your kinship!

"If you do not use the sketch," writes a contributor, "please inform me by postal card and I will send postage for return."

The women who roll along in their carriages, their pampered pets blanketed and cuddled upon their laps, and just a stone's throw away are little hollow-eyed babes, white and ghastly for want of nourishment; their tiny limbs pinched with cold under their scant covering; their heavy lids drooping over glassy eyes that look in vain for maternal care and food; their nose some little brother or sister, itself almost a babe; mother meanwhile soils ten weary hours daily to keep a wretched shelter over the little ones' heads. If the dames of favoring fortune could see these sights as I have seen them, Major, think you they would lavish their scores of dollars on costly pets to be fed with bon-bons and wrapped in shawls, while little soul-endowed children, precious jewels of genius, mayhap, starved and died?

Let us hope not! Let us hope not!

Major, dog though you were, you could teach many a lesson to us your superiors, and—

"He was killed for stealing!"

Yes, my dear sir, your sarcastic reminder of my hero's sad fate is correct; he was! Perhaps, sir, you are a statesman of unblemished character; Major's character was stainless until the unlucky day of his demise; then be careful that you die not under a Credit Miser scandal!

Even in Major's death we learn: none of the world stamping that ever was heard. I might add, just here, that the manager had sixteen supers under the floor to pound against it and assist in the applause.

The tragedy had ten acts, and six scenes to each act. The manager wanted to know why the thunder did not make it longer, but I apologized and told him I had run out of material, but I might yet add a few more acts.

In the second scene, when the young man

kicks kicked out of the house by the old governor,

the most thrilling interest was excited, and the author was called out. That is to say, one fellow who had left the audience sent up for me to come out—he wanted to tickle me, as he thought that last scene was an inspiration on him, for he had been there a few nights before. I didn't go out for fun.

In the third act, where a jealous rival kills the hero and heroine by stabbing them both with a corn-cutting, tears flew around among the audience, and they loudly called for the author; they said they wanted to kill him too. But, in the fourth act, when our hero—(bear in mind that both the he and heroine were brought to by a good Samaritan corn-doctor who happened to be passing along on his way to attend a patient who had such a corn he hadn't worn his boots for a week), when our hero engaged in a battle where forty persons are killed, besides a member of Congress and some supernumeraries, and has both his ears shot off by one ball, the audience couldn't hold themselves and had to hire darkness to hold

them.

In the next act the Prince (remember, he had put on a clean shirt and made himself known) took passage for Coney Island, but on the way he got sea-sick and fell overboard, and was swallowed by a whale. The heroine jumps over and is swallowed too, declaring she will follow him but this act was left out, as whales were very scarce that season and we couldn't borrow one for the occasion.

In the sixth act the Prince engaged in a single-handed contest with six cavaliers, who saluted out of castle Five Points, and slew them all. In this whole sixth act there were only thirty-nine persons killed. The manager said ought to have had more blood and butchery in it; but if there is anything I supremely despise it is to see a tragedy with so much blood and thunder in it. It isn't nice, and it doesn't come up to my ideas of true art. In this, Shakespeare and I have one mind.

In the seventh act, the scene where the Prince was chased by a rhinoceros had to be omitted, as no rhinoceros was on hand.

The eighth and ninth acts were left out at the request of the audience, who wanted to get home before daylight.

During the play I modestly sat on the front of the stage to the left, where I could note the effect it had on the audience; but it was something strange that they would laugh at the serious parts and groan at the humorous passages. I sat up there on the stage, too, so I could pick up what bouquets might be thrown over in that part of the city, I guess. The curtain rose, and that was all the rose I saw.

The last act concluded the piece. Toward the end the characters got to be so wicked that I thought best to kill them off, which was done by the explosion of a barrel of powder under the stage.

That tragedy had the greatest run on record. It was run off of that stage. It ran to South America. It ran to the island of Madagascar, and it is still running, and I don't think that it will ever stop.

King of Dahomey has depopulated half his kingdom with that play—it has acted to life. But if I ever write another tragedy, I'll put more tragedy in it.

blues skies and gentle zephyrs and supper-time, he stepped on her sore toe and she pounded him with the hoe-handle, his scream of pain and dramatic rage were very effective and brought down several lamp-chimneys and stoga boots. When this passage was rendered with all the power of the actor:

"Malinda McKitabel, if this is love—

To lose my appetite for eatables,

To bear the whips and scorns of an outrageous father,

Because your love indifference to work;

To go neglecting every day the pigs;

To think of them when I forget my prayers,

And sleep to dream of nightmares and of them;

To look up to your old shoes with reverence—

Then I'm in love, say, several hundred feet."

And she replied:

"Well, Charles Augustus Niccumock,

You're a good husband, but I'm not half as good as you are."

Years back, I was a bachelorette, but I'm not half as good as you are."

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Years back, I was a bachelorette, but I'm

COQUETTED.

BY CRAPE MYRTLE.

And it is thus that we must sever
The bonds affection wrought?
And must I lose this pearl of light,
My soul in faith hath sought?

The charms of fashion on thy face
Bore like spell, my heart to me,

And, now that fickle fancy tires,
You say that we must part.

The stars in yonder Orient
Seem not more true than thee;

But, ah! what treacherous changes
Sweep o'er life's checkered sea!

Fals' lips and fair! as numerous
As winged roses leave,

Are the bows you make and lightly break,

And fond, true hearts deceive.

The rich wine glowed on either cheek,
And the brightness of thy eye,
Bespoke what faithless memory,
Your lips did not deny.

Ah! brightening eye! ah! tender lip!

I deemed them fond and true,

But, ah! what a gaudy scene the light

From heaven's bluest blue.

And now, fayreys! I will not pine,
O'er wretched sweets of love,

My manhood craveth constancy,

As misers love their gold.

For all thy faithless woman's troth,

My full, free pardon's granted;

For love's young dream is buried deep,

And my soul is disenchanted.

each in a separate cell. We will decide their fate presently."

The two were dragged away, the slaves and attendants were dismissed, and again the mullah and the emperor were alone.

"Thus is my palace guarded," said the tyrant, in a voice terrible in its concentrated rage.

"There must be treachery somewhere," was the mullah's calm reply.

"There must. See that it be inquired into. If I discover any base intrigues in my harem, the guilty die, no matter what their station or rank."

"I will make secret and subtle inquiry, and report to your highness," said the mullah, who all the time was gnawed at heart as if by vultures.

"Do so. Remember, this evening at the third hour, the betrothal," reiterated the angry monarch; "let them show any foolish repining or false coyness, and they share the fate of Medora."

The mullah prostrated himself, and went out, rage and despair in his heart.

"That I should ever have served that man," he muttered to himself, "that in my intense folly and apathy I should have yielded for life's sake to be the slave of such as he."

And he ground his teeth in passion and despair.

What was to be done?

The emperor's suspicions were aroused. His furious vanity and self-esteem, too, were aroused at the discovery that the beautiful young slave, Medora, hardly worthy of a devoted husband's love, had been a young wife before she entered his zenana.

This was a kind of blow to arouse all the most ferocious passions in a Moslem monarch. Strict orders would not only be given to all the guards of the palace, but they themselves would keep a sharp look-out for their own sakes.

To carry out the terrible plans which surged in the young man's head required time. Still he could but try.

Bent upon trying the experiment, he left the palace without seeing the girls, and bent his way toward his own residence.

Here he once more assumed an European disguise, and wended his way to the house of John Bowen.

Here, in a small room, he found the three friends assembled.

They had reached the city on the previous night, and had been awaiting him impatiently ever since.

His gloomy brow, his blank and cheerful aspect, did not tend to raise their spirits.

"What fatal accident overthrew our plans yesterday?" asked Ashurst.

"The suspicious caution of the emperor. Unfortunately, events have made him even more cunning and suspicious," was the answer.

And the mullah explained.

"Then there is no hope!" cried Lionel.

"None that I can see," murmured the captain.

"Hope ends only with death," said the mullah, moodily. "I have a last resource."

"What is that?" asked Ashurst.

"Insurrection. There is in Tangiers a large and easily-inflamed fanatical mob. Let it go forth that the emperor is about to wed three Christians, and their furious and ignorant passions will be aroused."

"Easy to start such a rolling stone, not easy to stop it," said the soldier, dryly.

"We have no other hope," continued the mullah. "The seeds of revolution are ripe. In addition to the stupid and ignorant fanatics, there is a large and powerful party who weary of the tyranny and sloth in which his majesty lives. They are quite ready to put the Prince Mirza on the throne."

"But will he consent?"

"We don't ask the consent of princes in revolutions in this country," was the dry answer. "If they refuse, we chop their heads off and set up somebody else."

"But can we aid you?"

"Yes. You know that yacht in the harbor, which brought your foes hither?"

"Of course we do."

"You must, while the fray is going on, contrive, with the assistance of John Bowen, to select a cargo and secure it. In that we must take our flight."

"But are you sure of your insurrection?"

"Quite, of starting it. How it will end is another thing. As a rule, the palace always submits to a revolution."

"And the emperor?"

"It is usual to put out his eyes, and then confine him for life. I fancy your friend Prince Mirza would spare him the former cruel punishment. Though," said the young man, moodily, "I know not but what he deserves it."

"Does the prince know?"

"Nothing. He will be the last to be made aware of the movement," said the mullah; "as soon as his friends are in motion, he must go with the stream or perish."

"When would you advise us to seize the yacht?" asked Ashurst.

"To-night, and remain on board. If Sir Thomas Harcourt or the earl come on board," he said, with a terrible and withering scowl, "detain them; I authorize you to do so."

And with these words he retired to give his final orders to John Bowen, who was delighted at the prospect of undoing some of the evil which he had unwittingly done.

The mullah then returned to his home, and in his sacred garb, began a round of visits to the more humble priests of the fanatical party.

By inuendos, by hints, by warnings, he prepared their minds.

They would hear of a great blow to their religion on the morrow.

Then he obtained an interview with some of the leaders of the young Morocco party, and prepared them for the eventualities of the morrow.

The volcano was slumbering.

It required but a torch to start the combustion.

At eight, the then hour of the night, the mullah returned to the palace.

The betrothal of women in the position of our heroines was a mere theatrical ceremony, but the Orientals are very partial to it for that very reason.

The mullah, with slow and weary step, approached the harem to prepare them.

He found the entrance blocked by the swarthy guard, and entrance refused him.

The emperor waited his presence in his lesser hall of audience.

What could this portend?

The mullah was on the rack. He had sown the storm, and would surely reap the whirlwind.

"Pity, mercy! He came against my will," she cried, piteously, as she tried to kneel.

"Vile wretch! I take no man's wife from him. You are as guilty as the daring thief who has crept into my palace to steal you away. Take them to the lower dungeon; put

each in a separate cell. We will decide their fate presently."

The two were dragged away, the slaves and attendants were dismissed, and again the mullah and the emperor were alone.

"Thus is my palace guarded," said the tyrant, in a voice terrible in its concentrated rage.

"There must be treachery somewhere," was the mullah's calm reply.

"There must. See that it be inquired into. If I discover any base intrigues in my harem, the guilty die, no matter what their station or rank."

"I will make secret and subtle inquiry, and report to your highness," said the mullah, who all the time was gnawed at heart as if by vultures.

The emperor growled out something which was quite inaudible, and then waved the mullah to a seat at a great distance.

They were alone.

"Where have you been?" asked the monarch, in a voice hoarse with passion.

"Preparing, your most sublime highness, for the betrothal and the marriage," said the priest, in as firm a tone as the other's, but still quite respectful.

The emperor growled out something which was quite inaudible.

"I have been faithful to your majesty to this hour," said the priest, in slightly quivering accents—he was conscious of a little Jealousy.

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McKay looked confused, and turned away his head to cover a look of anger.

"I will try what I can do for you with the chief," he said; "but I fear I shall plead in vain, as he seems bent upon keeping you."

"You have been hospitably received under my father's roof, sir," said Helen; "and you will make but a poor return if you will not do anything to save me from disgrace and shame."

"What would you do to free yourself from the hands of Darromed?"

"Anything—everything."

"Then would you reconsider the refusal you gave me at your father's house, a year ago?"

Helen instantly arose and looked at him with a fixed gaze, which caused him, in spite of his effrontry, to turn a variety of colors, and swear inwardly.

"You would take advantage of that, then?" she said, slowly. "A gentleman—at least one who deserved the name—would have thought twice before offering an insult of this kind to a woman in my situation. You ask me to marry you, as you asked me once before, and I refuse."

"Remember where you are," he said, harshly. "You may need my help to get you out of the hands of Darromed, and I am likely to refuse it if you retain your present opinions. An insult? What do you mean, girl? It is no insult I offer you—I, a gentleman high in social rank and in the army, and you the daughter of a penniless subaltern in the Yankee service."

"You have said enough, sir, and my answer is given. I must beg you to leave me to myself as I am not desirous of your company."

"I am afraid you do not know me," he said, slowly. "You may drive me too far, and force me to show you what my power really is. There are worse fates than to be the wife of even so poor a man as Colonel McKay."

"Yet I will dare them all, sir, in preference to such a fate. Leave me at once, and keep up your plots against the unhappy whites of the north-west. There is blood upon your soul, sir—the blood of the many unfortunate who have been slain in this cruel and useless war. Unborn thousands will know your history, only to execrate it bitterly; and McKay will be a bugbear to frighten children with in after-times."

The colonel grated his teeth harshly together, and he made a half motion to raise his hand, as if he would have struck her. It was well for him he did not, for Handy Pat was standing not far away, and the expression of his face was anything but pleasant. If McKay had looked at him he might have had good cause to doubt whether he had a very safe servant in the Irishman. But Pat controlled himself, and approached them with a benignant smile.

"That's right, master. That business have she to talk that way to a colonel in the service av the king! Strrike her wid yer fist av she looks at ye that way ag'in!"

This good advice had the effect the Irishman intended, for it drew the wrath of McKay to himself, and he bestowed a buffet upon the unhappy Irishman which "brought the claret" from his nose in a plentiful stream.

"Sorra receives the hand av ye!" growled Pat. "Phat did ye hit me fur?"

"To teach you to attend to your own affairs, you rascal. Interfere with me again, and I will give you up to Darromed, and let him use you as he intended."

Pat retreated, and McKay followed, full of wrath. He had made but little in his attempt upon Helen, and was satisfied that she despised him as much as ever. Two years before he had bowed his pride to make an offer of marriage to her, when he was forced by a wound he had received by accident to make an asylum of her father's house, and had been refused so promptly that he had not the courage to renew his offer. Whether he had set the Indians to attempt her capture and follow her persistently, she was still in doubt; but she knew that he was a man of great determination, and rarely gave up anything upon which he had set his heart.

The Irishman was in a quandary. Satisfied that his former master needed him, for the present he felt himself safe, but he had no guarantee that he would not deliver him over to the tender mercies of the British officers when they reached the post. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising that he did not care about staying under his new master any longer than was absolutely essential to his own safety and well-being.

"Now see, master," he said, "Will ye tell me where we are goin'?"

"Silence! your stupid tongue!" commanded McKay. "It is enough for you to know that you are to obey me, and the first token of insubordination will be the signal for me to throw you into the hands of the Indians or of the troop from which you deserted."

"Sure ye wouldn't do that same, master dear!" howled Pat. "I got tired av staying in wan place so long; an' I thought I'd try this side av the line a bit. A poor gossoon like me ain't answerable for what he does."

"I want you to understand my orders, then. You are to watch that young lady night and day, and see that she does not escape. If you should be unfortunate enough to permit her to do that, you may as well drown yourself, for I shall have no mercy upon you."

"Deed an' I don't think you would, master dear," groaned Pat. "I'll watch her; sorra time will I take me eye off her till she's safe wherever ye want to take her."

"Very good; see that you keep to that idea and I will make it worth your while. I am a very good fellow as long as you do not make me trouble, and when you do, I am one of the worst men in the world. I have set my heart upon a certain object, and I intend to accomplish it."

McKay strode away, leaving poor Pat standing like a statue, staring after him, evidently greatly troubled because he could not hit him.

"Oh, yis; a nice man ye ar, av I do say it phat shouldn't. I'd like to be at a tay-party wid two or three just this blag'ards as you be, alanh! Whooh, it hurts me til the sowl av me that I don't dare to stow a stone at ye, an' cave in yer hid. I'm to watch Miss Helen, an' Deed an' I'll be the finest watcher ye ever heard till aw."

Pat scratched his head and considered. "Now Masther Clinton is off, I dunno phat I'll do. Whooh! How it scared me whin he wint over the hill on the black horse! It's him that can do it, anyhow. An' thin, there's Gilbert; phare the devil is he, anyway? An' the rid haythen, Owasco; such a fine lad. I'll be the deeth av that blag'ard av a Darrymid war av these days, sure."

McKay had been in close consultation with Darromed, and now came forward again and spoke to Helen. "I have interested myself in your behalf," he said, "in spite of your cruel

ty to me. But, as I told you, it will be useless for me to try to get you out of his hands, except in one way."

"You need not trouble yourself to tell me what that way is, sir," she said. "I think I can fathom your shallow plan."

"Still I must state it. If you will say that you are my wife, I can claim you from him, and he will give you up."

"Your wife; yours?"

The expression of utter detestation in her tone was so bitter that all the blood in McKay's veins seemed to turn at once to gall, and he seized her fiercely by the wrist.

"Mad girl, do you know what it is to drive me to despair? I warn you, as you value all you hold dear, to think before you dare insult me again. I have told you that I love you as a man addressing a woman, as humbly as I can. You have only replied by insults, and I will not endure it. Now then, listen to me. You have looked your last upon your home, you have seen your father for the last time, unless you consent to go back as my wife."

"You are not in earnest?"

"You will find it so."

"Then," said Helen, turning her eyes with a piteous gesture in the direction of her home, "dear f'r ther, farewell! Now, sir, I am in your hands but remember that I come of as good blc' d as you, and our race prefer death to dishonor."

"What would you do?"

"Kill you, if you dared to lay a hand upon me. Look"—she produced a small but keen dagger. "My lover gave me this, the man I am to marry, and in whose love I glory. Do you know who he is? The man whom to-day your red miscreants thought to bound to his death, but whom God in His great mercy and providence preserved so wonderfully. He escaped, and while he treads the earth you is known to their master. See, see!"

"Huh!" was the guttural exclamation.

"See you how the blood of the red-man is flowing yonder? McKay is the cause, and I will not forget it. He it was who stirred up the Indian to fight against his white brothers, and now the power of the tribes must be broken."

"I have no fear that the white man will be beaten, an' it is better so. The tribes must know their master. See, see!"

The Indians were broken and flying in wild disorder through the woods. They heard the charging cheer of the legion, and caught glimpses of their blue uniforms and bright bayonets dashing through the cover. A cloud of fugitives ran along the river bank in wild dismay, while some cast themselves into the stream, preferring rather to meet that fate than to feel the steel of their pursuers.

"We must away," cried the Onondaga. "My life would not be worth one of the shining coins of the white man if I stayed." "Go, then!" replied Morena. "I have no fear of the coming Indians, for they know that I am a true friend."

Owasco turned and ran rapidly up the stream to a point half a mile above the scene of the battle, and sitting down in a place where a screen of bushes hid him from the view of those upon the other bank, he waited anxiously.

When he escaped with Gilbert from the toils of the savages, into which they had been led by the treachery of McKay, he had been compelled to make a *detour* in order to get away from them, and when he considered himself safe, none of his party could be seen, nor had they answered his signals, and he was forced to believe either that they had perished or were prisoners in the hands of the enemy. He had turned back because he found the country full of Indians, advancing to the rendezvous of the Rapids, and he knew that the great struggle was about to commence, but had not come in time to join it.

Sitting concealed under the bushes, he was aware that a man in ragged and bloody attire was crawling down the opposite bank. In spite of the mask of blood and filth in which he was enveloped, Owasco knew his enemy, Darromed. After launching the poisoned arrow at Gilbert, he had made a circuit, and passing through the rear of the Americans, gained the bank of the river. There was something horrible beyond description in the savage chief in his blood-stained garb, and he was evidently half-maddened by his misfortunes. He did not pause long upon the bank, but plunged boldly in, and when he appeared upon the surface, swam vigorously toward the very spot where Owasco lay concealed. The Onondaga loosened his hatchet and knife, and prepared for a desperate encounter, for he knew that Darromed would be no easy prey.

The Wyandot reached the bank at last, and drew himself up slowly, evidently in great pain. Owasco then for the first time saw how badly wounded he was, and the generous heart which beat in his red bosom would not suffer him to assail a wounded man. But he lay quiet, while the chief slowly ascended the bank when he sprang up suddenly and appeared before him, with his hand upon his hatched.

Darromed uttered a low, guttural cry, and looked at the Onondaga with a glance of fire, as he slowly drew his knife from his belt.

"Renegade dog!" he hissed. "You have stood upon the heights to laugh at the destruction of the greatest plot the Indians ever framed; you, whose skin is red but whose heart is black; you, who should have stood by my side, fighting against the enemies of your race. Come to me, and I will give the crowd your body to pick at. Your scalp shall not hang in my lodge, with the scalps of those who have fallen in battle bravely; I will tie a stone to it and sink it in the depths of a black river, for it is not worthy to hang beside brave men."

"Your blood has flowed fast and you have lost your mind, or you would remember that I have fought with you before," answered Owasco, quietly. "No, I am not a fool, neither am I a coward. When you are strong enough to fight, I will meet you, and teach you what it is to meet the wrath of an Onondaga chief. Where is Helen, the girl whose face is fairer than the Night Spirit, whom you stole away?"

"Do I not say you are a coward? Who ever dared to face Darromed in anger?"

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ed away in a straight line northward. The trained eye of the young bee-hunter was enabled to follow it some distance; and as it disappeared from sight, a smile of satisfaction lighted up his youthful face.

"A pretty good 'line,' I am sure," he mused; "but here is another bee—two, three or them."

Sure enough, three more bees had settled upon the bait, and Ruben at once imprisoned them under his cap. When he removed the covering, he found the bees busy in the cells of the comb; but, one by one they came out, rose up, and having circled around the spot, flew away. Two of them went in the same direction as the first one, and the other in an opposite course.

Ruben arose, secured his bait, and started away to 'line' the course taken by the three insects. He moved quite rapidly for some distance, when he slackened his speed and began searching for his bee-tree.

Experience had taught him that the wild bee usually made its hive as high from the ground as possible; and that the eye alone could not be depended on entirely, as the height of the insects or the dense foliage concealed them from view, as they passed in and out of their hive. As their homes are always made in a hollow tree, the bee-hunter first selects a tree whose outward appearance bears evidence of inward defect. Then he makes the circuit of the tree, glancing carefully along the body for the entrance of the hive. If failing in discovering any hole, he places his ear against the trunk of the tree, and if the bees are active, and his sense of hearing is acute, he can generally hear a dull, buzzing sound vibrates through the body of the tree.

Ruben finally came across a large tree whose lower parts showed signs of inward decay, but the foliage was so dense that he made no attempt to test its secrets by the eye, but at once applied his ear to the body of the tree. He started, and a cry of delight burst from his lips. Up among the foliage he could hear the buzzing of myriads of wings quite distinctly. He could not see the bees, however; nor was he positive that they were in the tree under which he stood. There were other large trees standing near, and even mingled their boughs with those of the one first selected, and should he make a mistake in the tree, as he was liable to do when depending entirely upon the ear, it would cause a great deal of confusion and unnecessary labor when it came to securing the honey. To determine this, the youth extended his search still further. A novice would have become disengaged with half the pains already expended by young Gregg; but the youth felt amply rewarded for his pains, when, upon searching among the true bee-tree, he found a number of dead bees, some small bits of honeycomb, and other matter usually excreted from the hive of an active and healthy colony of bees.

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Being satisfied now that the tree under which he stood was the right one, Ruben walked out a few paces from its trunk and circled around and around it, until he finally discovered the place where the bees entered the hive. He now made a survey of the surrounding vicinity in order to familiarize himself with the locality and select the best place to fall the tree. As this was usually done after night, when convenient to camp, it was highly necessary that the hunter make all his calculations so there would be no delay, nor trouble of lodging one tree in another.

The youth having thus made his calculations, took out his knife and cut a perpendicular gash in the bark of the tree on the side on which it was to be fallen. Under this cut his own private mark, so that other hunters could not lay claim to the tree and its treasure.

His day's work thus completed, he started on his return to camp. A low, soft whistle, full of meaning, suddenly arrested his attention.

He stopped and gazed around. He caught sight of the figure of a man standing half concealed in a clump of shrubbery not far away. At the same instant he saw the man's arm sweep through the air—he heard something come clipping through the leaves—something blurred his vision, and with a groan he sank unconscious to the earth—stricken down by the hand of a hidden foe!

CHAPTER XIII.

A REVELATION.

THE sun stood upon his noon tide meridian, and poured his warm rays down upon the glimmering bosom of the Keya Paha and the camp of the bee-hunters.

Eager, expectant eyes watched either shore from the little barricade, expecting each moment the return of the five hunters that had gone out in the morning.

Soon after the departure of the five bee-hunters in the morning, Dakota Dan, Jonathan Duncan, Edith and Mehitabel were safely lodged in the camp of their friends.

Edith's heart beat joyously in the expectation of meeting Ruben. The time and circumstances under which she anticipated their meeting, would be a happy and joyous surprise to him. She was bitterly disappointed, however, when on arriving at the island, she learned that he had departed but a few minutes previous. With all the impatience and anxiety of youth, she watched the sun creep slowly up the heavens. It seemed to her as though noon would never come, and that at times the sun stood still. But at length the hour for her lover's return came, and when the others came in and he did not, her heart grew sad with disappointment and fear.

Dakota Dan had astonished the bee-hunters with the intelligence that a large party of Sioux were in the vicinity, and upon the war-path with a vengeance. And had the party all been present at the time, measures would have been taken for an immediate return to the settlement.

In fact, those at the camp talked the matter over, and resolved, with the concurrence of the others, to return home as soon as the party came in. But the non-appearance of Ruben defeated all their calculations. They would not go off without him, or a knowledge of his fate.

So they waited until he had sufficient time to get around, in case he was not in trouble, or had ventured further away than had been consistent with the time allotted him, and not having made his appearance, parties were sent out in various directions in search of him—Dakota Dan and his dog Humility being the first to leave the fort.

The afternoon was passed wearily, uneasily and anxiously enough at the island. To Edith,

the uncertainty that hung over the life of her lover became almost agony itself.

Ishmael Searle, the commissioner, excused himself from partaking in the search for Ruben, upon the grounds of his ignorance of the lore of the border. As he could make full hand, however, in defending the place, he felt that he would be no incumbrance there, and so decided to remain.

He saw that Edith was in trouble about Ruben, and endeavored to console her grief without compromising a knowledge of the source of her sadness. But Edith had little to say to him, or to any one, in fact.

It was evident to the observing Jonathan Duncan that Ishmael Searle was enamored with the maiden, and was endeavoring to draw her aside that he might engage in private conversation with her. At the same time, it was also evident that Edith managed to evade the commissioner, as if she anticipated his object.

Duncan himself had also proved a source of annoyance and uneasiness to Edith, nor was he entirely ignorant of the fact. He had, quite frequently, permitted himself to be caught studying her features in a solicitous manner. He was trying to compare the features of the maiden with those of the picture taken from him by White Falcon; and the longer he gazed at her the stronger became his conviction that she was the child of the Lonsdales.

During the afternoon, he gained the opportunity to say:

"I beg you will pardon my seeming want of manners, Miss Dufford, in staring you out of countenance. But, if you will give me a minute's private conversation, I will explain why I have done so, and may tell you something to your advantage."

Edith breathed freer now; she granted the interview, and walked with Duncan to the opposite side of the little fort.

"First, I wish to inquire, Miss Dufford, whether or not your parents are living?"

Edith was surprised by the question. It was so different from what she had expected that she felt herself disappointed. She had hoped that he had something good to tell her of Ruben—or at least, some idea to advance regarding the youth's prolonged absence from the camp. In a tone that was indicative of her disappointment, she said:

"They are not living."

Had Edith been looking at the man, she would have seen the corners of his mouth twitch, and a light of satisfaction and delight beaming in his eyes.

"Have you relatives living at Niobrara?" he questioned.

"I have an uncle," she replied, wondering whether she was committing herself in a manner that would some day bring her sorrow and trouble.

"Then you live with your uncle?" Duncan pursued.

"I do."

"Is he your father's or mother's brother?"

"Mother's."

"Is he an aged man?"

"He is about fifty, I believe."

"Was he a boatman on the — river before he came to Niobrara, or at any time in his life?"

"He may have been, though I can not answer for certain."

"What is your age?"

"Nineteen," Edith replied; "but I am sure," she continued, "I confess my ignorance of what you desire to learn, or find out, by questioning me concerning my friends."

"You will please pardon me, Miss Dufford, if I decline for the present to tell you more than this: I am searching for the lost heir or heiress of a large Eastern estate, and have thought, with good grounds for it, too, that you are the person I am looking after. However, I do not wish to compromise myself further, for fear the rightful individual, whoever that may be, would be defrauded, if the object of my search becomes publicly known. Still, I have every reason to believe, Miss Dufford, that you are the individual. If you will grant me another interview, after the trouble and uneasiness consequent upon the absence of the young bee-hunter is settled, I will make a detailed statement of facts to you. It is not probable that you can fully establish yourself without the concurrence of your uncle and aunt, as there are incidents—links in the great chain of evidence—which only they can supply."

A puzzled, reflective look settled upon Edith's face. In all her life she had never heard the slightest intimation of what Duncan had hinted to her; and but for the positive assurance of the man, the earnestness and honesty of his face and tone, she would have believed he was trying to deceive her for some purpose or other. Even as it was, she thought he was mistaken in the person he was in search of. She knew her uncle and aunt were honest people, and would keep nothing of her parentage concealed from her, through evil motives.

Having promised Duncan another interview, the two separated and mingled with the rest of the party.

Duncan assured himself that what had passed between him and Miss Dufford had been unheard by any but themselves inside of the little defense. But in this he was mistaken. The keen ear of Ishmael Searle had drawn in nearly every word of their conversation. And soon after the interview had ended, the commissioner was seized with a strong desire to go out and aid in the search for Ruben; and as no one urged any serious objections, he immediately took his departure.

"Lord!" exclaimed Jonathan, aside to young Hobart. "I wish Dakota Dan was here now. I'd have him follow Ishmael Searle to the end of the world."

"Why so, Mr. Duncan?" asked Hobart.

"There's something wrong about that man."

"Do you wish to insult me, Jonathan Duncan?" Hobart asked, firing up with resentment.

"Mr. Searle, sir, is a gentleman, and—"

The report of firearms came through the woods, cutting short the conversation between Hobart and Duncan—calling their attention in the direction of the sound.

CHAPTER XIV.

DAN MAKES A DISCOVERY.

WHEN Dakota Dan and his dog left the island and in search of Ruben Gregg, they moved briskly and silently away through the forest in the direction that Ruben was supposed to have taken.

The ranger had left his mare on the opposite side of the river, free to roam at will and feed upon the green herbage of the woods.

Dan was satisfied that the young bee-hunter had fallen into the hands of the Sioux, if he had not been shot down in the forest. As he proceeded along, the ranger kept his whole attention fixed upon the movements of his dog, which was allowed to precede him. He knew the keen scent of the dog would not fail, where his own sight would, in detecting the trail of the red-skins; were there any in the vicinity. In this he was right. As they moved along, the dog suddenly gave a low bark, then with his nose close to the earth he began frisking

hither and thither, his body half crouched upon the ground.

"Struck it, by Jude! ar'n't ye, old dorg?"

The dog looked toward his master and wagged his tail. Dan stopped and reconnoitered the surrounding vicinity, but could detect no sign of enemies about. He turned his attention to the movements of his dog. The animal had stopped and was sniffing around a certain spot in a manner that told Dan he was off the trail. Advancing to where he was the ranger saw the cause of Humility's queer actions. There was a pool of blood upon the ground and leaves, and this had denuded the scent of the animal and prevented him from following up the trail of the red-skin.

The blood was coagulated, although it had not been long shed, and a careful examination of the surroundings convinced him that it was the very spot where some person had fallen under a blow. He found innumerable moccasin tracks in the soft soil around the blood, and among these was the unmistakable imprint of a white man's booted foot. This surprised Dan. It was now evident to him that some white man who had not discarded the foot-wear of civilization, had had a hand in the affair that shrouded Ruben's disappearance in mystery.

Dakota Dan was not the man to allow such a matter to pass idly. He carefully raked the old leaves aside in order that he could see more perfectly the shape and outline of the foot. He found it so plain and sharply defined that there was not a single doubt as to its exact size, and cutting a slender stick, he measured the length of the track, and its breadth; he charged his memory as to its shape, and made a mental calculation as to the probable heft of the man by the indentation of the foot.

This done the ranger led his dog away from the blood, washed his muzzle at a little stream hard by, then circled the spot where the man had fallen until the dog again struck the trail of the departing red-skins. He knew, by frequent drops of blood along the way, that it was the trail of the party that had the wounded person in custody. But to his surprise, he discovered that the booted foot was not among those of the red-skins. He shook his head dubiously, while a vague suspicion rushed across his mind—the suspicion that some of Ruben's own friends had been accessory to this murder, if murder it was.

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He stepped aside and concealed himself in a dense clump of bushes, calling Humility to his side.

A few minutes later a white man came from the west and paused within a few paces of where Dan was concealed. It was Ishmael Searle, the government commissioner!

A few minutes later he was joined by the notorious renegade chief, White Falcon!

It was evident that they had met by appointment.

Dan bent his head and heard Searle ask, as the chief drew nigh:

"Well, did you get him secured?"

"Yes, he's where hell not be found soon again. He's come to his senses, and has quit bleeding. Lord! you must have given him a terrible jolt on the head. But how's matters at the island?"

"Complained."

Dan ground his teeth and gripped his knife till the bones in his fingers fairly cracked.

"Dakota Dan and Jonathan Duncan, with the women, are there, as I told you before," the ranger heard the villain Searle continue. "I overheard Duncan talking with Edith, and he appeared to be pretty well satisfied that she is the right person. Dakota Dan is out looking for Gregg, as are others of the bee-hunters also. By keeping a close lookout, you may capture them; and every one killed or captured of course will weaken the defense of the island."

"To be sure it will," mused Dakota Dan.

"You can't kidnap the girl, then?" White Falcon asked.

"No," responded Searle, "I figured the question in every possible way, but there is no chance whatever. She is too closely guarded. In that way we could get Duncan himself, perhaps; if so, we may force him to reveal all that would be of importance to us in this matter."

"Well, what then?" questioned Donald Gray.

"Then, if I cannot induce Edith to wed me, we can keep her in custody and substitute an heiress that would favor our plans."

"That's so, Searle," replied the chief. "You are a deep one, Ishmael—as scheming as you are deceiving. Ha! ha! ha!—Ish Sorel a Government commissioner! That is a good one. What a set of blockheads them Niobrarians must be to let themselves be taken in by such a man in such a manner! But I'll bet you could keep it up all fall, and they wouldn't be any the wiser for it. They don't know more than the man in the moon who are agents and who are not."

Dakota Dan fingered his rifle nervously, and but for the presence of two-score of savage warriors but a short distance away, he would have put an end to the existence of the two white feuds. As it was, he was compelled to forego all hostile demonstrations; but he felt amply repaid by what he had heard, and chuckled to himself in anticipation of what was to come.

"You're complimentary, Donald," Searle replied; "very complimentary. But see here; you keep your tools scouring the woods for those fellows that are now out, and I will return forthwith to the island and keep an eye and ear open for the programme of the two feuds. If I should have a voice in the proceedings, but your life I'll make it to our advantage. That old Dan, however, is likely to be the chief spokesman and head-center of the party, and it will require great caution and skillful head-work to outwit him. But as I was going to say, I will meet you to-night about the time the moon rises, at— Well, you say what point?"

"You'll have to leave the island in a canoe, won't you?—well, then drop right down the river, and I, with an escort of warriors, will meet you in a canoe in the middle of the stream, opposite the mouth of Rattlesnake creek. We can hold our conference there, certain that no prying ears will hear what is said. You want to make certain of the movements of the bee-hunters; the strength of their camp; the location of the women's tent; and the most accessible point for an attack. Just so we get the girl and Duncan into our clutches, the latter dead or alive, is all we need trouble ourselves about."

"Well, then, let it be understood," replied Searle, "that we meet on the river about the hour the moon rises. I'll have to study up an

excuse between now and then, in order to get away from the island without being suspected."

"Oh, that'll be no trouble for Ish Sorel to do," replied Donald Gray, with a low, wicked laugh.

"Then again let it be understood that we meet at moon-rise on the river, opposite the mouth of Rattlesnake creek."

ONE THING AND ANOTHER.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

How very strange some words will run!
When four or five measures run!
The very worst or pettiest runs
Has taught to do with.
You can not call a fighting cur
By any means a colonel,
And thoughts which people might infer
Can not be called infernal.

A man who's caught out in the rain
Can't help call'd a ranger;
And he who suffers from a strain
May never be a stranger.
The man who bears aloft the flag
Means no harm that is flagrant;
And though my meanings may be vague
It is no sign I'm a vagrant.

The man who sleeps upon a bank
Not always is a wanderer;
But gentle as the wind and rank
Are sometimes filled with rancor.
Whene'er a warrior feels blue
It's no sign he's a Blucher,
And he whose hopes and fears are few
Cares little for the future.

The good acts which a person does
Are not always to be done;
But you mustn't spile things by bein' over-brash.
I'm in big hopes the corn-juice vendor'll make it a easy job for us. The varmints is sure to git drunker 'biled owls, an' s'posin' they don't rub out the captives fast, the thing'll be easy enough. All we kin do now is wait," added Jack Gavin.

After this discovery, the time dragged weary enough to the four hunters; and whenever an Indian moved nearer the captives, their hearts throbbed fast and painfully, lest it should be the signal for a tragedy they were powerless to prevent.

"Don't believe there's any liquor in the barrels," muttered Coon, uneasily. "Tisn't in Indian blood to keep from swilling so long, when whisky is so close and handy."

"Keep cool, boy," replied Gavin. "Kiowas ain't fools. They wouldn't 'a' tuck the trouble to tote empty bar'l's so far, an' ef d's emptied 'em sense, you wouldn't see so much cuite ridlin' as is goin' down than. Wait until they're done 'ridin' the drygoods fast; then they'll wade into the wet groceries, I reckon."

At length the sun set and night descended. The Kiowas side-hopped their ponies and turned them loose to feed. They gathered a lot of brush and buffalo chips, and soon had a huge fire blazing. The head of one of the casks was knocked in, and the orgie began.

"We mustn't lose no time," muttered Gavin. "Them impes may take a notion to hev some fun wi' the captives, when they git crazy drunk. Get your laryits—tie 'em together. Make haste!"

Firmly knotting the rawhide lassos together, the trappers crept along until directly above the two captives. Then the rope was made fast beneath Gavin's armpits, and he was lowered to the level below. The captives were evidently alarmed, but the old man quickly reassured them.

"I'm a fri'nd—we're goin' to git you out o' this scrape, if you don't spile all by makin' a rumpus. Thar—" he severed their bonds.

"The gal fast. Don't be skeered, little one! Thar's strong arms an' true hearts up yonder. They won't let ye tumble."

Annie was looking very earnestly in her husband's face; and there was a puzzled expression added to the seriousness of her pretty brown eyes. Annie Bessemer was not an extravagant woman, and she knew it perfectly well. She was a capable, managing woman, who could make a dollar go further than many women could make two go, and she was well aware of that, too.

So, what could George mean? He colored a little under her quiet scrutiny before he answered.

"Grease on my coat? on my dress-coat?

"Where's the stupid fool? Where's my coat? Mrs. Bessemer, where's your management?"

"In a better place than your bump of order, I am sure. Why do you leave your coat on the lounge last night? I cannot go around after you and wait on you, George. Surely I have enough to do; and you have as many pair of hands as I."

Mr. Bessemer had no answer ready, and he fell to eating his breakfast with a will.

"What on earth is the matter with that arm-chair? What is that big black spot on it? Patience alive! look at the *tele-a-tele!* On both ends a similar place! Annie, has George been in here with bread and butter?"

He turned severely to Annie as he spoke.

"Oh no; I don't allow that. I think it is grease from your hair, dear. It used to be on the tides every Monday."

"You take it coolly. Why, woman, the furniture is ruined—ruined!"

"Of course it is ruined. I knew it would be when the tides were taken off."

He stared at her a moment, then walked over to the mantel. It was marble, and in the center were several small, dull brown spots.

"What's that, I'd like to know? Perhaps it is grease off my hair!"

Annie laughed.

"Oh, no; but you made the marks laying down lit cigars. There used to be a silver canvas-receiver, you know."

"Humph! What else have I done, Mrs. Bessemer?"

He tried to be crushingly severe, but Annie was not to be crushed.

"Not much in here—only this, on the piano, where you have set down the lamp when I was playing for you. The kerosene seems to have stained the rosewood terribly."

"Bother the kerosene! don't I hate the plaguy lamps! I'll have gas in to-morrow."

"I wouldn't, George. It'll cost a great deal, and, besides, before I took away the pair of scarlet mats from the piano, the lamp never did any hurt—not in four years."

Was she quizzing him? Inwardly he shook his head at himself.

"Come up-stairs a minute, George. I've lighted the lamp, and I want you to see how nicely the bed-rooms look."

She took his arm, and chatted merrily as they went up, and then she led him deftly past the bureau, biting her lips as she watched his keen eyes alight precisely where she wanted them.

"Annie! what does this mean?"

He dropped her arm, and pointed to the stained marble top, where there were a hundred little rings of dull, dirty hue.

"Why, it must be where you've set down your toilet-bottles. I declare, see how the bottom of the bottles fit the marks."

She very innocently looked up in his face that began to take on a curious, half-quizzical look. Then he went across the room to the wash-stand.

"Since I am on a tour of investigation, I will see how many marks of soapsuds I have left here. Humph!"

Sure enough, the wash-stand looked very shabby; and the wall before it was spattered in a thousand places.

He looked a moment; then half smiled.

"Well, I suppose I am to admit that gim-cracks are cheaper than ruined furniture—eh?"

"Don't you find it saves the office things, dear?"

Annie fired off her biggest gun so calmly, so affectionately; but George started, colored fairly red—purple, then, seeing the laugh gathering in his wife's eyes, and on her saucy lips, he collapsed suddenly.

"Beaten, with my own weapons, too! Little wife, fetch out the pretties, and let's cover up these tracks of my foolishness; and we'll regard them flags of triumph for you."

He caught her in his arms, and waltzed her around the room.

"I was wrong, Annie, and you were right—you're always right. Your little ornamental articles not only beautified, but actually saved money by keeping our furniture always new. You will forgive me?"

"If you will take this as a peace-offering for my having invaded your office."

She handed him the velvet slippers, laughing.

"You dear little woman," he said, and tried to catch her, but she was off to redecorate the house before her guests came.

It was not Irish stew and rice pudding she gave them for dinner; nor coffee and mackerel for breakfast; and the very next day Mr. Bessemer searched for and found their old cook and chambermaid. And instead of the seamstress he bought her a sewing-machine; so that Annie sits and sings and sews as happy as a bird.

Which deit compliment did not tickle Mrs. Bessemer as her husband intended it should.

"It shall be as you say," she returned.

"Discharge the servants yourself, George, and send me a stout German girl to do the rough."

Was she making fun of him? For the life

Mr. Bessemer's Lesson.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

of him he couldn't tell; and then Annie went out of the room.

She spied a door she never had seen before, and tried to open it; finding it locked, she turned to McWilliams. He blushed a little, then fumbled in his pocket for the key he had.

"It's pretty fixy for only men-folks, Mrs. Bessemer, but it's very convenient and pretty."

Annie opened the door, and saw—

A little room with one window, draped with lace curtains looped back with blue ribbons; a marble-top washstand covered with a china toilet set; blue and white mats, and on the wall, under the glass, and over the top of the stand, a blue and white wall-guard.

Carpet to match the outer room covered the floor, and a rug lay before the stand.

For the life of her Annie could not repress a scream of laughter; the next minute tears rushed to her eyes. Could it be possible George wanted to practice economy and plainness at home, and the while denying himself nothing? And then she wondered if he did not intend to make up for plain bills of fare at home by delicious restaurant meals!

Annie fled strangely. She was wounded to the very core, and yet—

Mr. McWilliams spoke suddenly:

"He bought them at a fair; and the pin-cushion yonder."

Sure enough there was a pin-cushion, a perfect marvel of ruffles, lace and bows; and Mr. Bessemer had hung it up by one of the loops to the wall. It was full of pins, too.

But Annie had resolved on a lesson to her economizing husband; and although it would be a task of weeks, she determined to "fight it out" on the line she laid down. In the end, she knew she would convince him that she was right, and not extravagant in "gim-cracks."

It was six weeks after this that Mr. Bessemer expected several friends in to spend an evening; and, naturally enough, he took a tour of the rooms to see how things stood. A full blaze of light filled the room, and as he entered the door, with Annie on his arm, he stopped stark still.

"What on earth is the matter with that arm-chair? What is that big black spot on it? Patience alive! look at the *tele-a-tele!* On both ends a similar place! Annie, has George been in here with bread and butter?"

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"It shall be as you say," she returned.

"Discharge the servants yourself, George. And Annie; and so Mr. Bessemer started for the city.

It was after eleven o'clock when Annie entered the private office of Mr. Bessemer's large dry-goods establishment, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

"How cozy the office is," she remarked.

"It has been three months, I guess, since I was here. Since then Mr. Bessemer has been making improvements, I see."

She glanced at the bright Brussels carpet; the suit of red velvet; the handsome base-burner; the six-globed chandelier; the four finely-framed chromes "Wide Awake" and "Fast Asleep," and the companion pair, "Yosemite" and "Niagara Falls"; the several walnut brackets on the wall, that held, variously, a vase of flowers, a small bust of Grant, an elaborate meerschaum of Mr. Bessemer's, and a volume of poems.

Annie smiled, then laughed so merrily that Mr. McWilliams joined her.

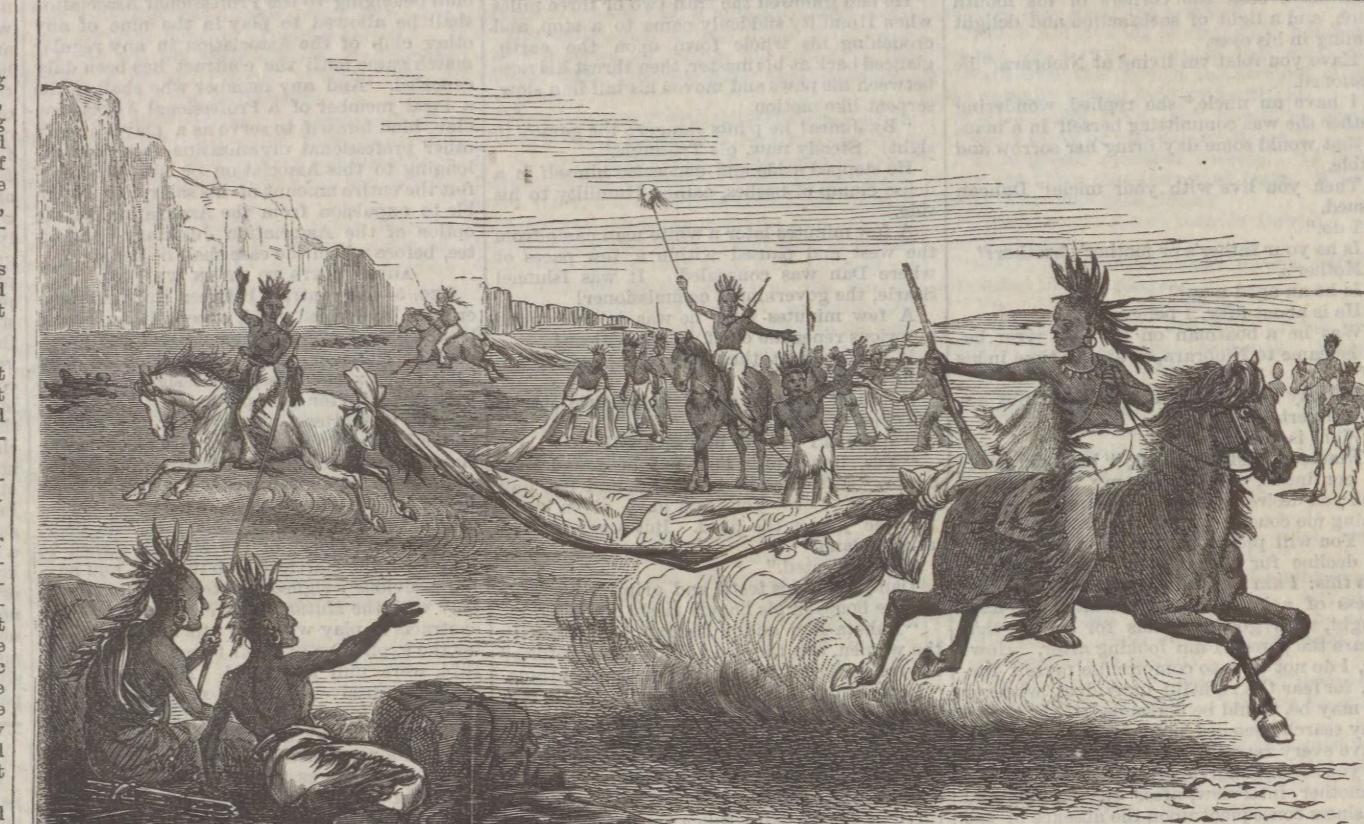
"It is so funny," she said. "Do you know what it cost to fit up the office—in detail?"

For answer he handed her two bills; one for the carpet, the other for the furniture, brackets, pictures.

She saw what the amount was, then gave it back.

"Mr. Bessemer has excellent taste. I like the office exceedingly well. Oh, what's this?"

"The Favorite Home and Fireside Weekly."



With a sharp pluck the stout cloth was stretched taut, then it parted near the middle.

"The truth is, Annie, it is just such gim-cracks as that"—he pointed to the pile of beautiful z